

For Immediate Release by Talbot County Council
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Talbot County Council to hold a Work Session on Tuesday, September 15, 2015 to discuss draft legislation to establish a Sustainable Tourism and Reinvestment District

EASTON, MD – The Talbot County Council will be holding a work session on Tuesday, September 15, 2015 at 4:00 p.m. to discuss proposed legislation to establish a “Sustainable Tourism and Reinvestment District (STAR District)” in the Land Use Table of the Zoning Ordinance. The work session will be held in the Bradley Meeting Room located in the South Wing of the Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland and is open to the public. Public comment will be at the prerogative of the County Council.

The proposed legislation is a redraft of Talbot County Bill 1305, the scope of which has been substantially narrowed. Bill 1305 sought to establish a “Planned Redevelopment District” as a floating zone in the Land Use Table. The proposed legislation would allow the County Council to consider proposals to redevelop/reinvest in Harbourtowne and the Martingham Golf Course Clubhouse and certain other tourism-related facilities.

As redrafted, it applies to:

"... parcels with existing legal nonconforming hotels, motels, community and cultural facilities^[1], golf courses open to the public, inns, marinas, or restaurants that have been in commercial use for at least 10 years and have a legal non-conforming status."

(¹ "Community and cultural facilities" are defined as, "establishments such as museums, art galleries, and botanical or zoological facilities of historic, educational, or cultural interest which are operated by public or quasi-public institutions." For example, Phillips Wharf Environmental Center in Tilghman is, in part, classified as a "Community and cultural center.")

The purpose of the district is

(1) "... intended to promote reinvestment and redevelopment of existing tourism-related structures or uses that are subject to the restrictions in Chapter 190, Article VIII (Nonconforming Lots, Uses, and Structures).

^[1] Defined as, "establishments such as museums, art galleries, and botanical or zoological facilities of historic, educational, or cultural interest which are operated by public or quasi-public institutions."

(2) The STAR district is intended to promote the local tourism industry, to encourage the economical and efficient use of land, and to encourage reinvestment in existing nonconforming tourism-related structures and uses through rehabilitation, redesign, upgrades, demolition, and reconstruction."

A copy of the proposed legislation can be found on the County's website at www.talbotcountymd.gov under "Topics of Interest" and "Press Releases".

Should you have any questions please contact the Talbot County Manager's Office at (410) 770-8010.